



*Substitute Specification (Clean)*  
*Appl. No. 10/814,510*  
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## TITLE

### **VARIABLE-LENGTH DECODING APPARATUS AND METHOD, COMPUTER PROGRAM, AND COMPUTER-READABLE STORAGE MEDIUM**

#### **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

##### **Field of the Invention**

**[0001]** The present invention relates to a technique for decoding variable-length code words for still images or moving images.

#### **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**[0002]** A method which uses an entropy encoding technique by run length/category encoding and variable-length encoding as one of the compression encoding techniques for still images or moving images is conventionally known well. This technique is employed even in JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) encoding and MPEG-1/-2 (Moving Picture Experts Group) encoding as international standards. In these encoding methods, an event for executing variable-length encoding is caused by implementing entropy encoding by assigning a Huffman code to a two-dimensional event called a run length and level (e.g., Japanese patent Laid-Open No. 2003-115767). The two-dimensional event of run length and level will be referred to as a symbol.